



## ICARC NEWSLETTER

November 30, 2025

Thanks go to the ARRL  
Foundation  
for it's support of ICARC's  
future tower and repeater  
upgrades at it's remote site

### **Officers for 2025:**

President – Craig Bigler, AB3XA  
Vice President - Cass Fitzgerald-N3FLO  
Treasurer - Chris Edwards, N3VFK  
Secretary - Larry Freeman, N3LT

### **Additional Board Members for 2025**

1. Bill Robinson-KC3ZAF
2. Stuart Younkin-WB3FBL
3. Phil Kopczyk -K3PJ
4. Robert Zugates-KB3JOF
5. Elmer Sorisio-KB3WG

### **LOCAL HAPPENINGS:**

#### **Activities at the remote site on Rhine Rd**

Almost all of the activities for October and November have been centered around getting the antenna mounting structure, antennas, and feedlines onto the tower, in order to get the new vhf repeater functional for 146.655 MHz (-). What follows is a brief summary of the tower site activity.

October 2, 2025

Tower climber, was able to affix two tower brackets; one at the 28 ft level and the other at the 55 ft level. In addition he was able to get six guy wires mounted. There was a ground crew on site who had everything ready for the tower climber. They attached the guy wires to the anchors and tensioned them to add stability to the tower. The tensioning will be fine tuned in the coming days.

October 6, 2025

Two club members traveled to Kittanning to assess aluminum pipes for use as a center pole. The pipe had wall thickness of 1/8" and, nominal, outer diameter of 1.283". It was decided to purchase and try it since the cost was low (\$30.00) and the specification for the bushing used on the top section was for a 1.25" pipe. The bushing on the old tower has an opening of 1.280"-1.293" opening. The pipe was obtained and taken to the site to be tested and it fit the old bushing. The length of the pipe is 20 ft. It can be cut to any length deemed appropriate.

October 14, 2025

Another grant committee meeting with the main objective to decide about batteries, duplexers and whether to ask for an extension on spending the money. It was decided to go with Repeater Builders for a 6 cavity set that can deliver like new performance of 100db receive/transmitter isolation.

October 16, 2025

The Tower Climber, put the 20 ft top pipe, along with the static brushes and long ground cable onto the tower. The brush is currently about 5 ft above the top of the tower. It will be raised later if deemed necessary. Ground crew: KB3WG- Elmer Sorisio, N3ARA- Mike Kosalko, KA2YOS-John Kalicicki, KC3YZW-Deryl Mack, N3LT-Larry Freeman.

October 21 2025

Two LiFePO4, Batteries BLF-2100AS ordered from Bioenno Power Inc. of Santa Ana, CA

Beyond October 21 the following general information is available:

The new backup batteries have arrived and the tower climber has made several more trips up the tower. The antennas for the new repeater are now mounted and operational. The duplexer cans have been purchased and await pickup from Repeater Builders, which will be arranged as soon as possible. The new Kenwood, 2m vhf repeater, W3BMD/2 on 146.655 MHz (-) is now operational using the old 4 cavity duplexers.

#### **Announcements:**

Remember the upcoming ICARC meeting on Tue, Dec 2, 2025, 6:30 pm at the Indiana, PA Eat 'n Park Restaurant.

The video links for the old tower take down are given below:

Links for Tower Take-down

Courtesy of Deryl Mack , KC3YZW

<https://youtu.be/c1LG7SRu9b0>

[https://youtu.be/risblzrA\\_hY](https://youtu.be/risblzrA_hY)

<https://youtu.be/zCV7vwqTMjk>

#### **Another Interesting Mode of Operation on the Rise:**

There is a newer, digital weak signal mode of operation that seems to be catching on: VARAC. It is an interesting mode in that unlike FT-8 and other modes it can ALMOST be conversational in that you can communicate keyboard-keyboard by typing your message and sending it as soon as you are done typing. There is no timed structure to the sequence. I suspect that many of you who do a good bit of FT-8 and FT-4 may be familiar with this. In any case take a look at the home page, you may find it interesting too. I've downloaded it but not yet tried it. Explore the home page at: <https://www.varac-hamradio.com/>

**Reminder:** The ICARC Public Service and Information Net happens on each Monday night starting at 8:30 PM using the W3BMD repeater on 146.91/146.31 Mhz. (ICARC is an ARRL affiliated club).

**Reminder:** The ICARC meetings are scheduled for the FIRST Tuesday of each month.

**Current Net Control Operators: Phil Kopczyk, Chris Edwards, Stuart Younkin, and Ralph Timblin. We thank you fellows very much. We can always use more.**

**Attention Technician and General licensees (and prospective hams),** have you thought about upgrading? Do you have trouble making it to an in-person ham exam? Now you don't have that excuse. Groups holding online ham exams have greatly expanded. Some groups are having exams daily. Reportedly it is an easy process if you have a laptop, desktop or tablet with a camera and microphone. Below are websites where you can look into testing online.

<https://wm7x.net/> One of the most popular. They have videos explaining how it's done.

<https://kl7aa.org/vex/remote-testing/>

<https://hamstrung/sessions/remote> Lists remote and in person test sessions.

### **From the ARRL Members Bulletin:**

October 1, 2025 (Just published)

#### **Amateur Radio Licensing Update During US Government Shutdown**

The ARRL Volunteer Examiner Coordinator, ARRL VEC, wants members to know that we are closely following the impact of the US Government shutdown on licensing for the Amateur Radio Service.

The government shutdown began at 12:01 Eastern time on Wednesday, October 1, 2025, when Congress had not passed an appropriations bill or other plan to keep the government funded for the new fiscal year (begins October 1).

The Federal Communications Commission, which issues Amateur Radio Service licenses, issued a [Public Notice](#) on Tuesday, September 30, indicating that it would suspend most operations following a shutdown. "Aside from a few emergency and auction filing systems, all other Commission electronic filing systems will be unavailable to the public until normal agency operations resume," said the FCC Notice.

ARRL VEC Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM, said the FCC systems appeared to go off-line around 1 PM Eastern time, and are redirecting to the Public Notice. This means the FCC will not be processing any amateur radio license applications during the shutdown, which includes individual, club, and exam session (new and upgrade) applications.

"But ARRL Volunteer Examiners should continue giving exam sessions," said Somma. "Keep doing what you're doing. Keep serving new and upgrade candidates for amateur radio licenses." Somma also urged that Volunteer Examiners continue to promptly forward session results from their exams to the ARRL VEC.

"Please do not hold your session results. Send your sessions to us, and ARRL VEC will continue to queue all applications as they are received. Once the federal government reopens, ARRL VEC will promptly resume submitting applications to the FCC for processing. So, keep sending sessions to the ARRL VEC."

The FCC Notice indicates that the CORES registration system will remain available to the public and will not be affected by the shutdown. Exam candidates can still register in CORES and be assigned an FCC Registration Number (FRN) at <https://apps.fcc.gov/cores/userLogin.do>. The FCC's Universal Licensing System (ULS) databases are currently unavailable to the public. ULS and related systems (like the License Manager, License Search, Application Search, etc.) are not accessible during the shutdown. Users cannot file applications with the FCC, or access license data, including address information.

To find an amateur radio exam session, please visit [www.arrl.org/find-an-exam](http://www.arrl.org/find-an-exam). For a list of VE Teams that offer Online Exam Sessions, go to [www.arrl.org/online-exam-session](http://www.arrl.org/online-exam-session).

### Pass The Bill

As a reminder, ARRL is continuing to collect letters from EVERY HAM as part of our grassroots campaign to pass the [Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act](#). The legislation is intended to prevent restrictive homeowners' association (HOA) rules that currently prohibit or severely limit the installation of amateur radio antennas. Send your letters now at [www.arrl.org/HOA](http://www.arrl.org/HOA).

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ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio

September 17, 2025

“The ARRL is focused on reducing legal restraints on the ability of American Amateur Radio Operators to engage in the active practice and enjoyment of Amateur Radio.

One of the most insidious and increasing threats to the survival of Amateur Radio and our ability to serve our communities and Nation, as we are required to do by Federal regulation, is the proliferation of private land use restrictions that prohibit the installation of outdoor antennas and that sometimes actually deny Federally licensed Amateurs from operating any amateur radios, regardless of where their antennas are located — in their attics, hidden in trees, or mounted on their vehicles.”

By sending a letter to your Representative and Senators asking that they co-sponsor and support H.R. 1094 and S. 459 you may help relieve unreasonable restrictions put on Amateur Radio operators by Home Owner Associations and other private entities.

Go to — <https://send-a-letter.org/hoa/> — enter your call sign and click on “Send My Letters” and your letters will be delivered to our Washington legislative team for hand delivery to your Representative and Senators

The following has been continued from previous ICARC Newsletters.

[ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio® filed comments \[PDF\]](#) with the Federal Communications Commission in response to its request for public input on alleviating unnecessary regulatory burdens by deleting or modifying rules, *In the Matter of Delete, Delete, Delete*. Implementing ARRL's suggestions would promote and protect the art, science, and enjoyment of amateur radio, and enhance the development of the next generation of radio amateurs.

In response to ARRL's request, over 200 members submitted suggestions that were reviewed when considering what rules should be deleted or modified. ARRL will continue to engage with members and advocate for the Amateur Radio Service.

In its filing, ARRL asked the FCC to delete or amend the following rules:

Delete the LF and VHF/UHF Symbol (Baud) Rate and Bandwidth Limitations

ARRL supports the deletion of these restrictions as proposed by the Commission in late 2023. Doing so would enhance Amateur experimentation with digital technologies.

Update and Modernize Entry Level Technician Class License Privileges

ARRL reiterated its earlier proposal for extending additional limited privileges for Technician class operators. Adopting its proposal would provide new licensees an introductory window to HF data and phone communications that are at the core of the Amateur Radio experience and serve to incentivize the next generation of technical leaders just as Novice CW HF privileges did for earlier generations of operators.

Modernize 80/75 Meter Sub band Divisions

ARRL requested action on an earlier proposal that would make more efficient and intense use of the 80/75 meter band. Changes in technology and modes since band usage was last addressed have resulted in overcrowding in one band segment that would be alleviated by adoption of ARRL's proposal.

Delete and Replace Obsolete Digital Code Limitations

ARRL also asked the FCC remove provisions that refer to digital codes that today are obsolete and permit Radio Amateurs to experiment freely with new digital codes, so long as such codes are publicly documented and decodable over the air.

Implement Changes to Third Party Rules Adopted Internationally at WRC-03

Although the United States fully supported changes to the ITU Radio Regulations in 2003 that removed a treaty requirement for third-party messages, there is no record of this change having been considered and the FCC's rules were never conformed to the new provision. Being the only nation known to continue to require a formal treaty for such purposes has resulted in no new such treaties for since the treaty changed more than two decades ago. Thus ARRL asked the FCC to Implement rules that are consistent with those internationally agreed to align with the rest of the world.

Delete Amplifier Drive Limitation

ARRL requested that the Commission act favorably on a pending proposal to remove limits HF amplifier gain that add to Amateur equipment cost and impede use of new efficient amplifier technology.

Remove Non-current Personal Information in Amateur ULS records

ARRL requested that the FCC complete a rule making in which it proposed that only current licensee information to be visible in the public (ULS) database. Right now, if an amateur changes their address to a Post Office Box to shield their home address, the previous address remains visible. ARRL advocates for protecting the privacy of radio amateurs.

Delete Obsolete Identification Requirement for Special Call Signs

Users of special event call signs are required to identify with the FCC-issued responsible call sign at least once

each hour. This can be confusing, especially on data and CW modes. ARRL proposed reliance on the web-based database that clearly identifies each special event call sign and authorized period of use.

#### Delete Obsolete Paper License Replacement Provision

The FCC no longer mails physical copies of amateur radio licenses, so ARRL suggested deleting the rule that provides for sending paper replacements as obsolete.

The [FCC notice](#) [PDF] generated a lot of interest among radio amateurs, with hundreds of Amateurs submitting comments directly to the FCC as well as responding to ARRL's request for suggestions.

The FCC deadline for filing reply comments is April 28, 2025.

It is hoped that the Commission will incorporate worthy suggestions in a future Notice of Proposed Rule making (NPRM) later this year. At that time there will be a new opportunity for public comment on the specific rules that the Commission proposes to delete or modify.

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ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio

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#### Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act Re-Introduced

##### Legislation Will Increase Communication Options During Natural Disasters

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators Roger Wicker, R-Miss., and Richard Blumenthal, D- Conn., and Representatives August Pfluger, R-Tex., and Joe Courtney, D-Conn. announced their joint re-introduction of legislation in the Senate and House to restore the right to Amateur Radio operators to install the antennas necessary to serve their communities. Homeowner association rules often prevent Amateur Radio operators from installing antennas at their homes even though Amateur Radio has proven to be essential in emergencies and natural disasters such as hurricanes when other means of communication fail.

“Mississippians should have access to every possible means of warning for natural disasters, including amateur radio operators. In an emergency, those warnings can mean the difference between life and death,” Senator Wicker said. “The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act would remove unnecessary roadblocks that could help keep communities safe during emergencies like tornadoes, hurricanes, and fires.”

“When disaster strikes, amateur radio operators provide vital, often life-saving information, which shouldn’t be hindered by prohibitive rules or confusing approval processes. The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act eliminates obstacles for ham radio enthusiasts, allowing them to continue their communications and serve their communities in the face of emergencies,” said Senator Blumenthal.

“Natural disasters and other emergency situations that hinder our regular lines of communication are unfortunately unavoidable, which is why we must bolster our emergency preparedness by removing the barriers amateur radio operators often run into when installing antennas. Amateur radio plays a vital role in public safety by delivering critical information to people at all times. My district is home to dozens of amateur radio operators ready to volunteer in the event of an emergency, and I am proud to lead this legislation,” said Congressman August Pfluger.

“As we know from recent natural disasters, amateur radio operators in Connecticut can be a critical component of disaster response and emergency management. It is in our communities’ best interest that we give them the capabilities to operate at the highest level, and with the re-introduction of this bill, we’ve taken a strong step in that direction,” said Congressman Court.

#### **Background:**

The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act of 2025 (H.R. 1094 and S. 459) would require homeowner associations to accommodate the needs of FCC-licensed Amateur Radio operators by prohibiting the enforcement of private land use restrictions that ban, prevent, or require the approval of the installation or use of Amateur Radio station antennas. Homeowner associations have often prevented installation and use of such antennas through private land use restrictions. This has hindered voluntary training for emergency situations and blocked access to necessary communications when disaster strikes.

Among other provisions, this legislation would:

- Prohibit homeowner association rules that would prevent or ban Amateur Radio antennas;
- Specify an approval process for installing Amateur Radio antennas;
- Provide a Federal private right of action to Amateur Radio operators in disputed cases.

On behalf of America's Amateur Radio licensees, Rick Roderick, the President of The American Radio Relay League, re-confirmed the ARRL's full support for the passage of the Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act of 2025 and extended his thanks and appreciation to Senators Wicker and Blumenthal and Congressmen Pfluger and Courtney for their unflagging leadership of the bi-partisan effort to support and protect the rights of all Amateur Radio Operators.

The text of the House version can be found at this link: [https://www.arrl.org/files/file/Advocacy/HR1094\\_House\\_Private\\_Land\\_Use\\_Bill.pdf?\\_zs=ab8xl&\\_zl=9xlE3](https://www.arrl.org/files/file/Advocacy/HR1094_House_Private_Land_Use_Bill.pdf?_zs=ab8xl&_zl=9xlE3)

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**No Minutes available from the October ICARC General Meeting**